



Reduced Prior Authorization Requirements

March 27, 2020

FirstCare Health Plan (FirstCare) is committed to supporting access to care and easing transitions for our members as they receive services from health system providers and facilities during this national emergency.

To help support the efforts of caregivers, FirstCare is making temporary changes to reduce the administrative burden for providers and facilities who are coordinating and delivering health care services for our members.

The following changes are effective immediately:

- We are suspending **prior** authorization requirements for admissions to **in-network** Skilled Nursing Facilities for all lines of business through May 31, 2020*. We are changing to a notification requirement.
 - Medical necessity is required, using Medicare criteria (Texas Medicaid criteria for FirstCare STAR members).
 - Facilities must notify us within 4 days of admission, including provision of clinical records, at which time FirstCare will perform an admission review.
 - Length-of-stay reviews will still apply.

- As per current requirements, we do not require **prior** authorization for starts of **in-network** Home Health Care Services for all lines of business through May 31, 2020*. Notification is still required for claims payment. Medical necessity is still required. During this period of reduced prior authorization requirements, FirstCare will perform length-of-stay reviews for services needed more than 10 days.

- Prior authorization is not required for COVID-19 testing and COVID-19 testing-related visits.

Please refer to [http://firstcare.com/en/Tools-and-Resources/Member-Resources/Coronavirus-\(COVID-19\)](http://firstcare.com/en/Tools-and-Resources/Member-Resources/Coronavirus-(COVID-19)) for up-to-date information from FirstCare related to COVID-19.

*Note that any existing plan benefit limits will continue to apply to the delivered services.